GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:9
ANSWERED ON:16.11.2016
Problems Faced by Indians Abroad
Adityanath Shri Yogi;Sawaikar Shri Advocate Narendra Keshav

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is maintaining a comprehensive database of Indians working in different countries and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether a large number of Indian immigrant workers are facing various types of problems in several countries especially Gulf countries and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps and initiatives taken by the Government to safeguard the interests of the Indian Nationals, particularly workers in foreign countries?

Answer

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 9 REGARDING "PROBLEMS FACED BY INDIANS ABROAD" FOR ANSWER ON 16.11.2016

(a) Yes, Madam, the data of the Indian workers, holding Emigration Check Required (ECR) category passport, emigrating on employment purpose to any of the 18 notified ECR countries is captured in a digital system introduced by the Ministry since 2014, called e-Migrate system. e-Migrate provides the Ministry a comprehensive and online database of emigrants, Missions, Recruiting Agents, Foreign Employers, Insurance Agencies to make the whole emigration process faster, transparent and allows online authentication/verification of credentials of all the stakeholders.

(b) Yes, Madam, complaints are received from Indian emigrants in ECR countries, from time to time, regarding violation of contractual terms, adverse working conditions, wage related issues, employer related problems, medical & insurance related problems and compensation/death claims.

(c) Immediately on receipt of such complaints, the same are addressed by the Indian Missions by taking them up with the concerned foreign authorities. Complaints pertaining to employment related issues are taken up by the Indian Missions with the concerned foreign employer / Labour Department officials in that country for prompt redressal. In addition, the Ministry has taken several steps and initiatives to safeguard the interests of the Indian Nationals, particularly workers in ECR countries which, inter-alia, are as under:-

I. Government of India has signed MoUs with 6 Gulf countries, Jordan and Malaysia. The broad principles covered in the MoUs include:

(i) Declaration of mutual intent to enhance employment opportunities and for bilateral cooperation in protection and welfare of workers.
(ii) The host country to take measures for protection and welfare of the workers in organized sector.
(iii) Statement of the broad procedure that the foreign employer shall follow to recruit Indian workers.
(iv) The recruitment and terms of employment to be in conformity with the laws of both the countries.
(v) Constitution of Joint Working Groups which would meet regularly to find solutions to bilateral labour problems.

These MOUs are renewed/ signed afresh from time to time and during this process any modifications are duly considered for inclusion.

II. The Government of India has set up Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) in all the Indian Missions/Consulates abroad to meet contingency expenditure incurred by them for carrying out various welfare activities for overseas Indian citizens who are in distress.

The Ministry has set up a 24X7 Helpline 'Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC)' in Gurugram, Haryana which provides information and guidance on all matters and problems pertaining to overseas employment of Indian nationals. Indian Workers Resource Centre (IWRC) set up in Dubai by Embassy of India, in UAE, provides guidance and counseling on all matters pertaining to overseas Indian workers in UAE. Four more IWRCs have been approved in Sharjah (UAE), Riyadh and Jeddah (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia). Shelter homes for distressed Indian nationals have been set up in Malaysia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. These shelter homes provide free boarding and lodging to overseas Indians in distress pending their repatriation.

Government of India has also started 'Madad' portal for online lodging of the grievances of the emigrants, which are attended to on priority basis.

Several Missions are conducting Open House on working days, to provide direct access to workers to convey their grievances. Some Missions have established 24x7 helplines and Toll Free helplines. They have also launched Mobile Applications to enable Indian workers in Gulf countries to contact respective Indian Embassies and Consulates when in distress or emergency situation.